

Trading Standards Officer

Trading standard officers (TSOs) check up on firms to make sure they are not breaking any trade laws. Enforcement or fair trading officers support them in this work.

The Work

As a trading standards officer you would ensure that traders keep to a wide range of laws in the following areas:

- fake goods
- product labelling
- weights and measures
- consumer safety
- under-age sales
- animal welfare.

You could be:

- making visits, possibly undercover, to businesses, such as factories, markets, pubs and night clubs
- checking that the managers are not breaking the law in the areas listed above
- giving advice to businesses about legislation and advising consumers about their rights
- investigating suspected offences and complaints about fraudulent practices
- checking that weights and measures are accurate
- making sure that product labelling is correct and advertising is not misleading
- taking away samples of goods to test in the laboratory
- writing reports and keeping records
- if a case comes to court, appearing as a witness.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

The average starting salary for a trainee trading standards officer is in the range of £20,000 to £25,000 a year. Salaries for qualified trading standards officers are up to around £35,000 a year. Senior trading standards officers may earn around £35,000 to £50,000 a year, with supervisors and managers earning more.

Conditions

- You will work in an office, but will drive about a lot visiting other premises.
- You would work between 35 and 38 hours a week, Monday to Friday.
- You will sometimes work in the evenings and at weekends.

- Part time work may be available.

Getting In

- To be a professional trading standards officer you would apply for a trainee TSO post and work through the qualifications framework set by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI).
- Entry requirements vary, ranging from 3 Highers up to degree (SCQF Levels 9-10) level. Entry level depends on qualifications and experience.
- There are three stages of qualification within the framework to be achieved – The Trading Standards Practitioner Certificate (TSPC), The Trading Standards Practitioner Diploma (TSPD) and The Trading Standards Advanced Practitioner (TSAP).
- Completing all three stages leads to the Trading Standards Professional Qualification.
- For details on other courses which may be similarly accredited contact the CTSI.
- You will probably need a driving licence.
- The CTSI website also advertises relevant job vacancies.

Jobs are available in local authorities and private industries such as food manufacture, retailing or quality control and management.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- strongly committed to protecting consumers' rights
- tactful and patient
- decisive
- assertive
- persuasive
- able to work alone
- able to stay calm and resilient in difficult situations
- willing to make unpopular decisions.

You need:

- good planning and organisational skills
- excellent communication skills with people from all backgrounds
- good observational and analytical skills
- good number skills to use weighing and measuring equipment and deal with statistics
- good writing skills to produce reports and prepare cases
- IT skills to keep accurate notes and records.

Training

- Training is on the job combined with part time study toward CTSI qualifications.
- You would keep your skills and knowledge up to date through CTSI's continuous professional and personal development scheme (CPPD).

Getting On

- You can later go into self-employment as a consultant.
- You can go for promotion to senior officer, section head or divisional officer, then assistant, deputy and chief trading standards officer. You might have to move to other parts of the country for this.

Contacts

Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)

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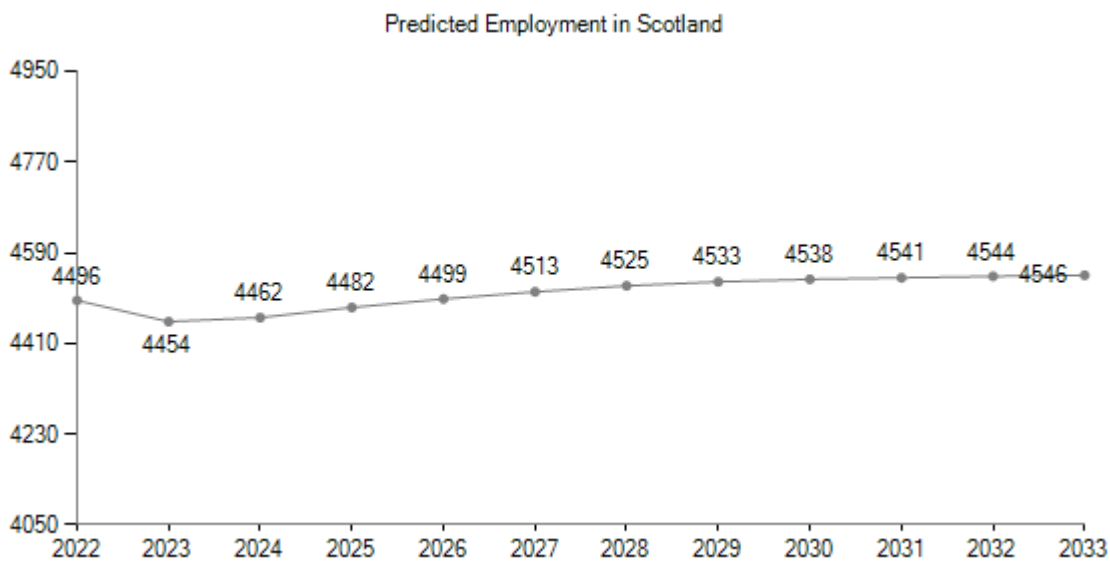
Facebook: www.facebook.com/CharteredTradingStandardsInstitute

Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.



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